

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CCO-00 CIAE-00 OTPE-00 FCC-01

INR-07 NSAE-00 OC-06 USIA-06 COME-00 BIB-01 OIC-02

IO-13 L-03 NASA-01 OES-06 SP-02 DODE-00 DOTE-00

FMC-01 SAL-01 CG-00 DLOS-06 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 NEA-10

/107 W

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R 171744Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1152

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 13731

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETEL, GW

SUBJECT: INMARSAT PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

REF: A. STATE 196200 (NOTAL) B. BONN 13506 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY DISCUSSED FRG PARTICIPATION IN INMARSAT WITH SIGRIST AND JAENICKE OF FOREIGN OFFICE ON AUGUST 17. THEY DESCRIBED BUDGETARY PROBLEMS FRG ENCOUNTERING WHILE NOTING IMPORTANCE OF FRG PARTICIPATION AND POSSIBILITY OF INMARSAT FAILURE AND RESULTING COMPETING SYSTEMS RESULTING IF FRG DOES NOT PARTICIPATE. THEY CONFIRMED FOREIGN OFFICE SUPPORT FOR PARTICIPATION. JAENICKE RAISED PROBLEM OF COMPETITION FOR EUROPEAN DEVELOPED SATELLITE OVER INDIAN OCEAN FROM ONE DEVELOPED FOR THE US NAVY. END SUMMARY.

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2. ECON MINISTER-COUNSELOR AUGUST 17 MADE CALL DISCUSSED

REFTELS ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY SIGRIST TO URGE FRG PARTICIPATION IN INMARSAT PREPARATORY COMMITTEE. AMBASSADOR JAENICKE ALSO WAS PRESENT. MINISTER-COUNSELOR GAVE BACKGROUND CONTAINED REF A AND POINTED OUT IMPORTANCE OF FRG INVOLVEMENT IN INMARSAT IN VIEW OF ITS LARGE MERCHANT MARINE AND STATUS AS A LEADING NATION IN TECHNOLOGY. HE NOTED UNDESIRABLE SITUATION THAT MIGHT ENSUE IF SMALL, DEVELOPING, OR COMMUNIST COUNTRIES COMPRISED UNDUE PROPORTION OF MEMBERSHIP OF INMARSAT.

3. SIGRIST SAID THAT FOREIGN OFFICE AFTER EXTENSIVE CONSIDERATION HAD DECIDED TO RECOMMEND FRG PARTICIPATION IN PREPARATORY COMMITTEE WITH FULL REALIZATION THAT SUCH WAS IMPLIED POLITICAL AND MORAL COMMITMENT TO FULL PARTICIPATION IN INMARSAT. THE PROBLEM AT THE MOMENT WAS BUDGETARY. BECAUSE OF INTERNAL BUDGET PROCEDURES IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT FOR FEDERAL POSTAL MINISTRY TO COME UP WITH FUNDS THAT ARE NOT SPECIFICALLY PROVIDED FOR IN THE BUDGET. THIS PROBLEM COULD BE OVERCOME WITH A POLITICAL DECISION BY THE CABINET TO INSTRUCT THE POSTAL MINISTRY TO GO AHEAD WITH THE EXPENDITURE.

4. THE FOREIGN OFFICE REALIZES THAT THE FAILURE OF THE FRG TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE COULD HAVE A DEMORALIZING EFFECT AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE FAILURE OF INMARSAT. THIS COULD HAVE THE UNDESIRABLE RESULT THAT THE US WITH JAPAN AND SOME OF THE LDC'S WILL GO IT ALONE AND CREATE THEIR OWN SYSTEM WHICH THE SOVIETS WILL MATCH WITH A COMPETING SYSTEM TOGETHER WITH WHICH- EVER LDC'S THEY CAN PERSUADE TO JOIN THEM. THE MARKET, JAENICKE SAID, IS NOT BIG ENOUGH FOR TWO SYSTEMS. FOR THESE REASONS THE FOREIGN OFFICE IS STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF FRG PARTICIPATION IN INMARSAT, BUT OTHER MINISTRIES ARE LESS ENTHUSIASTIC.

5. ONE PROBLEM JAENICKE SAID WAS THE RELUCTANCE OF SHIP

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 13731

OPERATORS TO INVEST IN TWO COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS WHICH WOULD BE NECESSARY AT LEAST IN THE EARLY YEARS OF INMARSAT. EVEN THOSE OPERATORS WHO ARE STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF THE SYSTEM WILL NOT SAY SO OPENLY, BECAUSE THEY HOPE TO GAIN A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE BY GETTING THE APPROPRIATE EQUIPMENT BEFORE OTHER OPERATORS.

6. JAENICKE RAISED THE MATTER OF THE COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITE THAT HAD BEEN DEVELOPED FOR US NAVY USE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN INFORMED BY A DEPARTMENT OFFICER AT THE RECENT INFORMAL INMARSAT MEETING IN LONDON THAT THIS SATELLITE WOULD BE AVAILABLE ALSO FOR COMMERCIAL USERS. THIS MADE QUESTIONABLE THE FEASIBILITY OF EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDIAN OCEAN SATELLITE. HE SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN AGREED WITH THE CONFIDENTIAL

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USG THAT DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIAN OCEAN SATELLITE WOULD BE LEFT TO EUROPEAN PARTICIPANTS.

7. COMMENT: SIGRIST SAID, BASED ON OUR DEMARCHE, THE FONMIN WOULD PURSUE THE MATTER WITH RENEWED ENERGY. HOWEVER, ANYTHING WE COULD DO TO REINFORCE THE FONMIN'S POSITION WITH OTHER GERMAN MINISTRIES WILL BE HELPFUL. ONE PROBLEM IS THAT WITH ELECTION COMING UP ON OCT. 3, IT IS DIFFICULT TO GET GERMAN DECISION ON THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE BEFORE DEC. 1

(AND WE WERE TOLD THAT THE DATE HAS NOW BEEN MOVED
UP TO NOV. 1).
HILLENBRAND

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